

## TRIBUTE TO MARY LEE ALLEN

**HON. VAL BUTLER DEMINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 7, 2018*

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments and life of Mary Lee Allen as she celebrates her 10th birthday this year.

Mary Lee Allen was born on May 15, 1918 in Branchville, South Carolina. Throughout her adult life, Mrs. Allen has given back to her community, neighbors, and church. She is known as a proud local small business owner and mentor to countless young women.

Mrs. Allen attended public school in New York and went on to earn a degree from cosmetology school. After she moved to Florida, she continued her education, taking advanced classes in hair and beauty.

On May 7, 1938, she married the late William J. Allen. The couple moved to Winter Park, Florida, and quickly became involved in their community. Mrs. Allen took the bold step of opening her own business—Mary Lee Beauty Shop. Throughout the shop's years of business, Mrs. Allen provided constant advice and support to young employees.

Mrs. Allen has been a member of Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church for over 60 years, and joined the church's Senior Missionary Society and Senior Choir. She also helped found the 'Ideal Women Club.' Over the years, she has received numerous awards and recognitions for her outstanding community service, and has earned the love and friendship of her neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have Mrs. Mary Lee Allen as a constituent, and I extend best wishes to her on her 100th birthday.

COMMENDING JESSENIA  
FILOMENO**HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 7, 2018*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commend Jessenia Filomeno, a young Latina who has dedicated her life to volunteerism and community service. She is a role model who selflessly mentors at risk youth and helps them achieve academic success.

She is a graduate from Brooklyn's Pratt Institute where she earned a Bachelor degree in Architecture. She has served as a young Ambassador to Brooklyn representing Puerto Rico. Since her youth and for the past 20 years, Ms. Filomeno has been a member of the Brooklyn Three Kings Day Parade Inc. where she coordinates the distribution of more than 1,000 toys for underserved children.

Jessenia is also the CEO of Filomeno Family Awards Foundation, Inc. A foundation who mentors and monitors the progress of the students they support from kindergarten to college. Jessenia and the Foundation annually host a gala where students are awarded scholarships and recognition for their accomplishments. When Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, Jessenia organized a community relief effort to help the children and families impacted by this disaster.

What is amazing is that Jessenia suffers from chronic Lupus disease and yet she manages to volunteer and help the underserved and most vulnerable in our community. Jessenia is proud to bring hope and a smile to all her initiatives. She states that she is very fortunate to be 35 years of age and able to live and contribute to society.

Please join me in saluting Jessenia Filomeno and the Filomeno Family Awards Foundation Inc. on the celebration of its annual gala held on March 31, 2018.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF MR. CYRUS "RUSS" M.  
JOLLIVETTE**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 7, 2018*

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my very dear friend, Mr. Cyrus "Russ" M. Jollivette. I was fortunate to have known Russ for many years. His untimely passing is a true loss for the State of Florida.

Russ was born on August 5, 1946 in Miami, Florida to Frances Reeves Jollivette Chambers and Cyrus M. Jollivette, Sr. He is the brother of two sisters, Regina Jollivette Frazier and Cleo Leontine Jollivette.

He held a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from C.W. Post College, a Masters of Business Administration in Management from Long Island University, and a Juris Doctor from the University of Miami's (UM) School of Law.

Russ dedicated himself to the advancement of higher education, health access and services, and public service. While well-known for his 24 years of service at UM, and his 12 years of service at Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Florida, there are many other organizations, educational institutions, nonprofits, and community groups that Russ started, chaired, or directed.

Russ committed himself to creating and supporting educational opportunities for students in Florida and beyond, at colleges and universities from the University of Miami to St. Thomas University, Florida A&M University, Florida International University, University of Florida, University of North Florida, Barry University, Jacksonville University, Eckerd College, and community colleges throughout the state.

He also played a major role in the world of health, seeking support for several hospitals and medical schools, and especially children's hospitals and schools of nursing throughout Florida. He had served as the Chairman of the Dade Public Health Trust, and always sought support for the Children's Hospital at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center, the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of the University of Miami Health System, as well as cancer centers throughout Florida.

Additionally, Russ played a role in the world of philanthropy. He directed relations for the UM Foundation for decades and directed the BCBS Florida Blue Foundation. He was responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars reaching education, health, community, and nonprofit initiatives.

Russ was a special leader in the world of higher education and public service, and a leader in the African American community. Everywhere he went, he made a positive impact on those around him.

Fond memories of Russ will forever remain with his daughter Lynn Jollivette Johns, and his two beautiful grandchildren, Richard Franklin II and Lauren Marie.

Mr. Speaker, I was truly honored to have known Russ and to call him my friend. He was kind and generous person, who was always giving back. I know that Russ' spirit and loving memory will always live on. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends during this extremely difficult time. He will be dearly missed.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. EVAN H. JENKINS**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 7, 2018*

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 162; YEA on Roll Call No. 163; NAY on Roll Call No. 164; and YEA on Roll Call No. 165.

HONORING WADE THOMAS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**HON. JARED HUFFMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 7, 2018*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wade Thomas Elementary School in Marin County for its recognition on May 3, 2018 as a 2018 California Distinguished School by the California Department of Education. Chosen for its exemplary high performance, as measured by state and national assessments, Wade Thomas Elementary School was one of 287 schools to attain this honor statewide. This highly competitive award reflects outstanding achievement and the highest caliber of professional service, family commitment, and community engagement.

With 412 students across six grades, Wade Thomas Elementary School offers comprehensive educational programs that academically challenge and instill a joy of learning in its students while ensuring that all children have the skills and knowledge to reach their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, this hard-earned distinction reflects true community success. From the students and their families, to the staff and administrators, and the extended community, Wade Thomas Elementary School has developed an education model for the state and the nation: empowering today's students to be tomorrow's problem-solvers, inventors, and pioneers. Please join me in congratulating Wade Thomas Elementary School on this impressive achievement.